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ABSTRACT

The racial categorization of children has become increasingly important as a measure to ascertain diverse needs among students as well as the appropriate manner by which teachers and other school personnel might respond to such needs through increased awareness and understanding. Multiracial children, the offspring of multiple racial unions, have needs that are not being met because, among other things, they are categorized on the basis of one race only on school forms. To analyze the ways in which the needs of multiracial children are not being met, school and federal documents were reviewed, and interviews were conducted with 30 urban and suburban teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. Theories of radical pedagogy were used to analyze the role that these cultural forms and significant personnel might play in fostering or obstructing a positive racial identity in interracial children. Findings show that the multiracial child is still nearly invisible because he or she falls through the cracks of the country's attempt to keep races "pure," even though there is no such thing as racial purity. A new multiracial category will help multiracial students overcome current negative perceptions, shape new perceptions, and change the nature of the multiracial experience. Three appendixes contain examples of school forms and federal documents and a checklist of school services for multiracial students. (Contains one table and numerous references.) (SLD)

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